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Home Stager's "Magical Touch" Sells Homes Fast

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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When Angela Gagauf first enters a home, a million things go through her mind.

"When I walk into a house for the first time, everything hits me at once," Gagauf said. She notices that the dining room needs a fresh coat of paint, the study has too many photographs, the hallway light requires a brighter bulb and the living room has too much clutter. Old light switch plates need to be replaced and some furniture needs to be rearranged to create an open feeling.

Gagauf of Montville is a certified home stager and owner of NJ Home Staging and Redesign. Homeowners and realtors call on Gagauf when they need to freshen up a home before it is put on the market. "You only have one chance to make a first impression," Gagauf said. "People need to get their house ready for listing."

NJ Home Staging and Redesign emphasizes the positive aspects of a home, getting potential buyers to see a home's beautiful focal points, while simultaneously downplaying a home's negative aspects. A buyer must be able to imagine themselves living in your home, Gagauf said.

Not many people want to spend money to fix something they are to sell, but it could make a big difference in the amount of time it takes to sell the home and the amount of money that it sells for, Gagauf noted. "Home staging will help you sell your home for the most amount of money in the least amount of time," she said.

"I am trying to get sellers to understand the cost of home staging is so much cheaper than the first price reduction," she said. "As a home stager, I am trying to create an ambiance so when people walk in, they can imagine the potential of a house."

Gagauf, a native of Saddle Brook, starts looking at a home when she gets out of her car. "What you see on the outside, you see on the inside." Get rid of that broken mailbox and the peeling paint on the windows.

Home staging is not expensive. It costs \$250 for a 2-hour consultation for Gagauf to walk through the home with the owner and make an evaluation. Prices for physical home staging are quoted on an individual project basis. Gagauf makes inexpensive purchases like decorative accessories to make a home more inviting. "You can fix things up with a little creativity," Gagauf said. "It doesn't take much."

Realtors say Gagauf has a wonderful success rate. Many of the homes she has staged for them sell for their asking price or more, and within a couple weeks.

"All of Angela's houses sold quickly because she always staged them well," said Natalie Wallach, a longtime real estate agent with Coldwell Banker in Mountain Lakes. Wallach suggested Gagauf pursue a career as a home stager after watching Gagauf's homes sell quickly.

"Angela has a very good eye for color and spatial relations," said Wallach, who used Gagauf to stage four houses for clients. "When she took full charge, those houses not only sold, they sold for more or got multiple offers."

Selling quickly and having multiple offers is unusual during this economy, Wallach said. On one occasion, Gagauf went into a home with an out-of-date bathroom, painted it and purchased new accessories, saving the sellers the expense of renovating their bathroom. "She seems to know how to make homes more inviting and spacious," Wallach said.

"When a house is staged, it looks cleaner and more refreshed," Wallach said. Staging is great for people on a limited budget because they can have great results without spending a lot of money.

In the current economy with so much inventory, it is more important than ever to stage a house, Wallach said.

Dr. Randi Tillman used NJ Home Staging and Redesign to prepare her Montville townhome for sale. "Angela helped us understand the changes we had to make that would be appealing to the buyer," Tillman said. "She helped us understand what we had to neutralize...what clutter we had to get rid of."

"She also helped us recognize that it is a very emotional thing when someone tells us what to do with our home and told us we should not view it as our home anymore-this is a product we are selling," Tillman said. "We should focus on our new home."

"I think the staging helped us sell our house for more money," Tillman said, "We had two bids within three hours."

Judy Avrin used Gagauf to restage her Pine Brook house and her mother's Montclair condo and had success with both. "For my mother's condo, I worked with Angela with a minimal budget and she transformed the apartment," Avrin said. Gagauf fixed up the condo for \$600 and it sold within a month. "She has a magical touch," Avrin said. "She has a way of standing in a room and seeing the possibilities behind the clutter."

Gagauf's business, NJ Home Staging and Redesign, serves homeowners and real estate agents in northern New Jersey. She is certified by the Home Staging Resource and is a member of the American Society of Home Stagers and Redesigners (ASHSR) and the Real Estate Staging Association (RESA).

Gagauf will speak about "Successful Home Staging," March 24 at 7 p.m. at a seminar at the Randolph Public Library on Calais Road. She will show homeowners how to attract buyers to their properties. For information or to register, visit www.randolphnj.org/library_programs/C14/.

For more information on Gagauf and NJ Home Staging and Redesign, visit www.njhomestagingandredesign.com or contact Gagauf at a@njhomestagingandredesign.com or at (201) 317-9072.

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